

Question: I understand the reason for seeing a paediatrician but why may children's social services need to be involved?

Answer: If an injury is confirmed by the doctor then they will contact children's social services to make enquiries. They will ask if you have had social services involvement in the past. They will share information and consider your baby and family circumstances to determine if there is a need for a referral to children's social services.

Social services **do not record** any details on your baby or family unless it is decided following discussion that a **referral** to their service is indicated.

Question: This is upsetting to me - why does this need to be done?

Answer: We know this can be upsetting, but the only way to pick up serious causes of injuries to pre-mobile babies is to assess every case where a bruise or mark (which could be due to injury) occurs. You will be treated with courtesy and sensitivity. You will also be kept fully informed at all times so that you know what is going on and why. You can ask questions at any time and you will be given the opportunity to discuss any queries you have fully at every stage.

Question: What happens next?

Answer: The health or social care professional will be in contact with the paediatrician straight away by phone to arrange for your baby to be assessed. They will forward written referral information to them and discuss when you should attend for assessment. This should preferably be within the next 2 hours.



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**Bruises or marks (which
could also be due to injury)
on
Pre-mobile Babies
Information for Parents/
Carers**



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Bruises or marks (which could be due to injury) on Pre-mobile Babies

Information for Parents and Carers

You have been given this leaflet because a health or social care professional has seen a bruise or mark (which could be due to injury) on your baby.

Babies who are not yet moving around and have such a bruise or mark must be referred to a specialist doctor (paediatrician) for medical assessment to try and establish the cause. You will be asked how the bruise or mark occurred on your baby. If the paediatrician thinks this may be an injury information-sharing will take place with children's social services (the Gateway Social Work Team) who will work with the paediatrician and other professionals to decide what next steps, if any, need to be taken including whether a referral to children's social services is indicated.

Question: What is meant by an injury?

Answer: An injury is when any incident causes a mark or bruise to your baby's body. It could be minor or serious. It could be due to an accident or deliberate harm.

Question: Why are bruises or marks (which could be due to injury) such a concern in pre-mobile babies?

Answer: Bruises or marks do not often occur in babies who are not able to move around by themselves. Daily activities such as feeding, nappy changing and normal handling will not usually cause bruises or marks. They can be a sign of a medical condition or due to an accident.

Occasionally bruises or marks may be due to injury as a result of neglect or deliberate harm. **In such cases babies may go on to be seriously harmed and have even died.**

This is why this protocol is initiated in all pre-mobile babies whether or not there is an explanation given. The only exception is when it can be established that the bruise or mark is explained by previous treatment or care provided by health professionals (including bruises or marks from birth trauma).

Question: Why does my baby need to see a paediatrician?

Answer: It is important your baby is seen and examined by a paediatrician who may carry out tests to try and find out the cause of the bruise or mark. Your health or social care professional will make arrangements for your baby to attend hospital straight away so they can be seen by a paediatrician. This doctor will try to see your baby as soon as possible but this depends on the health needs of other children who may also need seen by the paediatrician.

Question: What will the paediatrician do?

Answer: They will examine your baby fully and take a photograph of the bruise or mark with your consent. If an injury is confirmed they will share information with nursing staff, other professionals involved with your baby and will make enquiries with children's social services. They will decide whether blood tests or x-rays are required. Your baby may need to be admitted to the Children's Ward to get these tests done. When the tests are completed the doctor will explain to you what they think may have caused the injury. The professionals involved will decide whether or not a referral to children's social services for assessment is indicated.